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How athletes seize the moment

By Michael McCarthy

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The brand's biggest push since "All In or Nothing" in 2011

Some key things separate pro athletes from weekend warriors. Of course, there's the natural talent and physical skills. But there's also the mental approach. The pros excel at being able to learn from mistakes, and move on to the next play or game.

In the clutch, regular people often dwell on the implications of failure. Pros focus on executing moves they've practiced thousands of times. They're in the moment. They're focused on success, not failure.

Starting today, Adidas begins a fascinating attempt to impart some of that athletic wisdom with a new brand campaign called "Sport 15."

Simon Atkins, the brand's vp of brand activation, gave Adweek an exclusive preview of

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the first 60-second spot called "Take It." The spot (posted below), created by 180LA, will break Saturday during TV coverage of NBA All-Star Weekend in New York.

It shows action shots of Adidas endorsers, including soccer superstar Lionel Messi, Derrick Rose of the Chicago Bulls and DeMarco Murray of the Dallas Cowboys. We see them displaying the same intensity in practice as they do in a game.

A voiceover begins: "The last goal? Doesn't matter. The last victory? Already forgotten. Yesterday is gone. Lost in the record books. But today is up for grabs. Unpredictable. Unwritten. Undecided. Now is ours. Do something, and be remembered. Or do nothing, and be forgotten. No one owns today. Take it."

The creative message? Every split second in sports presents a new chance for you to redefine yourself and your team.

"As a brand that has a legacy with sports more than anybody historically, and across all sports, it's something that we see. It's something we wanted to start communicating to our audience," Atkins said. The best athletes have the "ability to use all of their experiences—good, bad or indifferent—to empower them for the future," he added. That insight was something Adidas wanted to inject into its "brand narrative."

Adidas is on red alert in the U.S., having seen rival Under Armour pass it in 2014 to take the No. 2 spot behind Nike in the multibillion dollar U.S. athletic market. Now, Adidas wants to take it to its rivals and be more aggressive in its marketing.

The "Sport 15" effort will be Adidas' biggest brand campaign since "All In or Nothing" in 2011, Atkins said. All told, it will be the brand's "biggest ever" ad spend in the U.S., he added, while declining to spell out numbers.

"What you're seeing is Adidas rewriting our playbook about how we want to express our brand, week in, week out," he said.

CREDITS

Client: Adidas

Agency: 180LA